



CONSTRAINTS IN THE DISSEMINATION OF IMPROVED GROUNDNUT VARIETIES IN MALAWI, MOZAMBIQUE AND ZAMBIA

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ABSTRACT

The National Agriculture Research Systems (NARS) have not achieved the expected development grade by the international community in particular, in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. Groundnut represents a major crop in the region and their production can literally improve the living standard of the community. Supported by ICRISAT, the NARS works actively in their research but the institutional constraints that they face are strong. In the frame of institutional economics of foreign aid, the research aims to explain the poor performance of the NARS in releasing improved groundnut varieties and why the dissemination and promotion struggles that the adoption rate remains extremely low in SSA.

Mostly centralized and slow, the NARS are slaves of their own procedures and bureaucracy. The three countries face similar constraints in forms but different in content and extent. Many constraints demanded or claimed by the NARS may be exaggerated, since internally they do not address them properly. In general, their resource endowment is low compared with the extension of their activities.

Transactional costs have increased, since there has been a shift toward country-specific, investing in short-run projects in development activities and driven by preferences of individual donors. Moreover, some development agencies may engage in a broader development project assuming high transaction cost in order to acquire funding. Since this is a descriptive research, the major outcome is the comparative explanation of the constraints that affect the performance of the NARS and the policy suggestions to the government that could improve the governance showing a credible commitment to invest in Agricultural R&D.

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